

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/598,593

Examiner

Victor S Chang

Applicant(s)

JOHNSON ET AL.

Art Unit

1771

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to amendment filed 11/11/2003.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 17-25.
3. ☐ The drawings filed on _____ are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
 - * Certified copies not received: _____.
5. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
 - (a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
6. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application. **THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.**

7. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
8. ☒ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No. _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the proposed drawing correction filed _____, which has been approved by the Examiner.
 - (c) ☒ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No. _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the margin according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).

9. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No. _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No. _____ | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

DANIEL ZIRKER
PRIMARY EXAMINER
GROUP 1300-
1700

Daniel Zinker

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Neil Duchez (#26725) on 11/26/2003.

The application has been amended as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS:

17. (Previously presented) A decorative automobile sheet comprising:
- (a) a clear coat comprising a blend of a fluorocarbon polymer and an acrylic or methacrylic resin, said coat having a first and second surface,
 - (b) an acrylic tie layer on the second surface of the clear coat layer,
 - (c) a fade print layer on the opposing outer tie coat layer surface,
 - (d) an optically clear chlorinated polymer layer on the opposing outer print layer surface, and
 - (e) a pressure-sensitive adhesive adhered to the chlorinated polymer layer opposing outer surface.

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24. (Original) The sheet of claim 17 wherein the optically clear chlorinated polymer is [connected] bonded to the print layer through a clear pressure sensitive adhesive.

Drawings

2. This application, filed under former 37 CFR 1.60, lacks formal drawings. The informal drawings filed in this application are acceptable for examination purposes. When the application is allowed, applicant will be required to submit new formal drawings. In unusual circumstances, the formal drawings from the abandoned parent application may be transferred by the grant of a petition under 37 CFR 1.182.

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

3. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

It is noted that in the amendment filed 11/11/2003 Applicants have cancelled previously rejected claims 1-16. In the Remarks date 5/6/2003, Applicants argue that Johnson teaches a painting process for automobiles involves spraying and dipping, and these processes provide a single color to the article; further, Johnson does not specifically disclose, teach or suggest a fade print layer. The Examiner finds such arguments persuasive. As such, the instantly claimed invention is not anticipated and unobvious over the Johnson reference.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably

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accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

AVERP2580US

**Title: FADE PRINTED DECORATIVE SHEETS AND METHODS AND APPARATUS
FOR MAKING THE SAME**

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Reference to Related Application

Claims the benefit of Provisional Application
This application ~~is a continuation of pending application~~ Serial No. 60/140,332,
filed June 21, 1999, the disclosure of which is hereby incorporated by reference in its
entirety.

VSC
12/5/03

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BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to decorative sheets which provide a change or fade in
opacity across the sheet. The decorative sheets are useful in vehicles, such as
automobiles, to provide detailing and customization.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

15 Automotive design and manufacture present a unique set of problems in the
selection of materials and processes used in the manufacture of automobile bodies. As
a form of transportation, automobiles are unique because most buyers want a vehicle to
have a certain individual styling. A recent trend in the automobile industry is toward
production of distinctive vehicles styled to attract specific groups of consumers. This
20 change has required the car builder to shift production from a few models manufactured
in large volumes to a larger number of more distinctive body styles. These
developments have demanded from the manufacturer both styling flexibility and
reasonable tooling costs for each body style.

25 It is difficult to provide a conventional process for painting an automobile which
provides a gradual and consistent fade of one color into another. Careful process
controls are required to provide a fade of one color into another. Even if it was able to
provide such paint, it would require a multistep process and be labor intensive. The
expense would make the production unfeasible. It is desirable to have a film which